

CLAIMS

1. An isoflavone-containing composition which comprises 15 to 95% by weight of malonyl isoflavone glycosides, 0 to 50% by weight of isoflavones other than malonyl isoflavone glycosides and 5 to 60% by weight of saponins, by taking the sum of the total amounts of isoflavones and saponins in said composition as 100% by weight.
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2. The isoflavone-containing composition according to Claim 1, which is prepared from soybean hypocotyls as the starting material.
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3. The isoflavone-containing composition according to Claim 1, wherein the proportion of group A saponins in saponins is 55% by weight or more, by taking the total amount of saponins in said composition as 100% by weight.
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4. The isoflavone-containing composition according to Claim 1, which has a water solubility of at least 20 mg/100 ml at 25°C based on the amount of isoflavones.
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5. A process for producing the isoflavone-containing composition according to Claim 2, which comprises the step of extracting soybean hypocotyls with 15 to 95% by volume aqueous ethanol at 10 to 50°C.
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6. A process for producing the isoflavone-containing composition according to Claim 2, which comprises the steps of:

- 5 (A) extracting soybean hypocotyls with 15 to 95% by volume aqueous ethanol at 10 to 50°C to obtain an extract;
- (B) bringing a solution of the extract obtained by the step (A) in water into contact with a nonpolar adsorbent resin to allow isoflavones to be adsorbed to the resin; and
- 10 (C) eluting isoflavones from the adsorbent resin with 15 to 40% by volume aqueous ethanol.

7. An edible composition containing the isoflavone-containing composition according to Claim 1.

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8. A process for fractionating isoflavones and saponins, which comprises extracting soybean hypocotyls with 15 to 95% by volume aqueous ethanol at 10 to 50°C to obtain an extract, bringing a solution of the extract in water into contact with a nonpolar adsorbent resin, eluting an isoflavone-containing fraction from the adsorbent resin with 15 to 40% by volume aqueous ethanol, and then eluting a saponin-containing fraction from the adsorbent resin with 65 to 90% by volume aqueous ethanol.
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